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American Mining Congress

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Secretary J. F. Callbreath, Jr., has opened an office at Room 8, 1416 F street, N. W., Washington, D. C., and will be glad to hear from each and every member of the American Mining Congress, and all others interested, as to what each has done in securing assistance looking to the creation of a National Bureau of Mines.

ANNOUNCEMENT

To the Members of the American Mining Congress:

For purposes of more convenient communication with our members, and to provide a forum whereby the best thought of professional and practical mining men may be crystallized and directed towards the solution of those problems which retard the higher advancement of the interests of the mining business generally, and to better enable the American Mining Congress to carry on its agitation for needed reforms in mining practices and to facilitate the work of its committees, a monthly journal devoted exclusively to the furtherance of the work of this organization will hereafter be issued from the Secretary's office in Denver.

The publication of this journal is a peculiar necessity, owing to the slightly altered plans of the Mining Congress which now provide for the formation of local or branch associations, which, while being component parts of the general organization, have in all matters of local interest all of the powers and privileges of the general body.

Periodical meetings of the local branches will be held perhaps monthly, or less frequently, as subsequent experience may determine. All essential information in the announcement of the time and place of such local meetings, together with an outline of subjects to be discussed, will be printed in an advance issue of the Journal, while a subsequent issue will contain a synopsis of the proceedings. This comprehensive plan enables the branches of the American Mining Congress to meet every requirement of a local mining organization, leaving to the general organization the consideration of all matters of general concern.

Contributions dealing with questions of practical import to mining are invited from all members, and they will be given the best consideration consistent with the space at disposal. All manuscripts should be brief, and will be printed only with the signature of the writer.

The Monthly Bulletin will be distributed free of charge to all members of the American Mining Congress, a portion of the annual dues being set aside by order of the Executive Committee to cover costs of its publication.

All correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary, American Mining Congress, 1510 Court Place, Denver, Colorado.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR A BUREAU OF MINES

We are glad to be able to advise our members that substantial progress is being made towards securing greater aid for the mining industry on the part of the federal government.

H. R. 13915 has been approved by the Committee on Mines and Mining in lieu of H. R. 1036, H. R. 1480, H. R. 3057, H. R. 10374, H. R. 12363, H. R. 12404 and H. R. 12430. This bill was committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed, and is numbered 14 on the Union calendar. The bill is as follows:

A BILL TO ESTABLISH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
A BUREAU OF MINES.

Be It Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled, That there is hereby established in the Department of the Interior a bureau, to be called the Bureau of Mines, and a commissioner of said bureau, who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and who shall receive a salary of six thousand dollars per annum; and there shall also be in the said bureau such clerks, agents, experts and other employes as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this act.

SEC. 2. That it shall be the province and duty of said bureau and its commissioner, under the direction of the secretary of said department, to foster, promote and develop the mining industries of the United States; to make diligent investigation of the methods of mining, the safety of miners, the possible improvement of conditions under which mining operations are carried on, the treatment of ores and other mineral substances, the use of explosives and electricity, the prevention of accidents, and other technologic investigations and inquiries pertinent to said industries, and from time to time make such public reports of the work, investigations and information obtained as the secretary of said department may direct, with the recommendations of such bureau.

SEC. 3. That the Secretary of the Interior shall provide the said bureau with furnished offices within the city of Washington, with such books, records, stationery and appliances, and such assistants, clerks, stenographers, type-

writers, and other employes, as may be necessary for the proper discharge of the duties imposed by this act upon such bureau, fixing the compensation of such clerks and employes within appropriations made for that purpose.

SEC. 4. That the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized to transfer to the Bureau of Mines from the United States Geological Survey the supervision of the investigations of structural materials and the analyzing and testing of coals, lignites, and other mineral fuel substances; and the appropriations made for such investigations may be expended under the supervision of the Commissioner of Mines in manner as if the same were so directed in the appropriations acts; and such investigations shall hereafter be within the province of the Bureau of Mines.

It is hoped that this bill will be brought up for a final hearing in the House of Representatives during the month of January, and from present indications its approval by the Lower House of Congress seems assured. The Senate Committee on Mines and Mining held a meeting during the first week of the session but failed to take definite action.

The discussion favored public hearings by the committee as to the necessity for the creation of a Bureau of Mines, and it is probable that the hearings will be ordered by the Senate Committee. Present conditions point to serious opposition in the Senate. This opposition was indicated in the discussion upon the resolution of inquiry growing out of the Cherry mine disaster, introduced by Senator Cullom of Illinois, calling upon the Secretary of the Interior for information as to what is being done by the federal government to protect the lives of miners.

We urge upon our members the importance of their assistance in securing the active co-operation of individual senators in bringing about the final enactment of this legislation. It is not enough, however, that senators shall be willing to vote for the bill. Each Western senator should take so great an interest in securing federal co-operation for the mining industry as to feel that the success of the bill is a personal triumph. If he fails to make his influence felt in passing the bill, he can hardly hope to exercise much influence in directing the work of the bureau when created.

The next two months will probably witness the final result of this endeavor to secure the creation of a Bureau of Mines. Let it not be again said that the West has manifested no interest. Let

each member of the American Mining Congress constitute himself a committee to see to it that the uniform demand of the West is made manifest at Washington. We have had the long pull and the strong pull, now let us all pull together. Act yourself. Get your friends to act. Do it now!

MEETINGS OF BRANCHES

SPOKANE BRANCH.

A meeting of the Spokane Branch of the American Mining Congress was held on Friday evening, December 17, 1909. President Matt Baumgartner was in the chair.

The meeting took up for discussion the topic announced in advance by the Secretary of the American Mining Congress in Denver, viz.: "How Local Effort Can Best Assist the Development of the Mining Industry by the Protection of Mining Investors, Either Through State Legislation or Otherwise."

Mr. L. C. Jaquish, in discussion of this subject, took the position that local effort, as such alone, could be of little benefit to the mining investor, for the reason that the average man views the mining business as a rank gamble or wild speculation, for which reason he refuses to take a business view of the situation; will invest his money almost entirely on the talk of the stock salesman, without investigation of the proposition or the men behind it. This relegates the question of protection of the investor entirely to state legislation. The experiences of the states of California, Idaho and Utah have demonstrated that assessable companies are practically the only ones that have any assurance of being able to develop a mining prospect; the assessment plan is fair and equitable, requiring each owner of stock to contribute his pro rata amount in proportion to his holdings to the development of the property. Coupled with the power to assess the stock should be included the obligation on the officers of the company to make frequent reports, setting forth the financial condition of the company, work done, money expended, for what expended, furnishing map of the property to each stockholder and, also, giving the treasury stock buyers the power, on written request of a majority of them, to compel the directors to levy assessments and develop the property in cases where they fail to do so without such request.

The subject next discussed was "The Conservation Policy of the Federal Government."

A brief history of the conservation movement was presented by Mr. L. K. Armstrong, beginning with the forest reserves as

the first step in this direction, followed by an increase of the area of forest reserves in the West and the movement practically withdrawing large numbers of water power sites from location and development, and the close restrictions placed about the location and development of coal lands, with the increase of government price for coal lands to the extent of 400 per cent. Mr. Armstrong pointed out that the effect of this great increase would be to very materially increase the cost of coal to the consumer over the high prices now being paid.

Dr. F. O. Hurdnett: I agree with the remarks of the previous speaker and would add that the impression should not be permitted to go out that this is in any sense a political movement. I would call attention to the great amount of propaganda work being spread among the people through the medium of the public press, and the leading magazines, which is evidence that a concerted effort is being made by interested eastern parties in this direction, as opposed to the interests of the people of the states possessing undeveloped natural resources. I would also call attention to the fact that the conservation movement as now being carried on is driving mining interests from the United States to British Columbia and Mexico, where they receive more liberal consideration; that eastern people are now being advised to go outside of the United States to make mining investments.

Mr. E. E. Alexander: Many opponents of state conservation, as compared with government conservation, use the argument that many of the states, notably Nevada, have wasted their public lands and have permitted them to be grabbed up by large interests until they have little or nothing left. I would recommend taking early steps to avoid a repetition of such experiences in the state of Washington.

Mr. Collins: I would urge immediate steps by this and other western states towards co-operation with the government by the adoption of constitutional amendments and statutes prohibiting private acquisition of natural resources, such as water powers especially, retaining the title in the state in which located and reserving the revenues therefrom to the people of the state.

Mr. R. A. Hutchinson: I move that a committee of five be appointed by the Chair to send a copy of the resolutions adopted at this meeting to Secretary of the Interior Ballinger, with the assurance that the efforts being made by this Congress on the subject of conservation are non-political in character; that it is not a slap either at him or the administration, but that we seek his co-operation in conserving the water power sites and the coal lands to the state of Washington for the people thereof. Motion carried.

The Chair appointed Messrs. R. A. Hutchinson, L. K. Armstrong, J. C. Haas, C. P. Robbins and R. S. Collins as the above committee.

The secretary of the meeting was authorized to send copies of the resolutions to such persons as may be named by this committee.

The assembly adjourned subject to a call for a general meeting at a later date, at which the conservation question will be further discussed.

ERNEST C. WOOD, *Secretary*.

Following is a copy of the resolutions adopted at the Spokane meeting on December 17, referred to above:

Whereas, There is a general federal movement tending to the conservation of the water, water powers, timber and coal of the western states and territories; and,

Whereas, This movement is of special interest to the residents, operators and investors within the borders of the several states thus affected; and,

Whereas, Out of an estimated total of 37,000,000 horse power possible of development from the water within the whole United States approximately one-half is contained within the limits of the northwestern and Pacific coast states and about one-third within the states of Washington and Oregon; and,

Whereas, These states have their own future to consider as to the ultimate disposition and control of their resources in order to derive the greatest use and benefits from them for their own people; and,

Whereas, While it is generally conceded that conservation is not only necessary but immediate action advisable, yet it is a debatable question as to the best methods of procedure; therefore be it

Resolved, That we most earnestly urge upon the people of Washington the necessity of co-operating with the federal government in the conservation of these resources to the end that the ultimate appropriation and use of these natural powers and resources shall inure to and be under the control of those most vitally concerned in their appropriation and use; be it further

Resolved, That the ultimate power and control of these resources be vested in the state whose people are affected by them, and that the coal lands, water power or water power sites situated wholly within a state be considered as state assets, and the revenues derived therefrom, whether by lease or taxation, shall accrue to the state in which it is collected, and that no federal tax shall be collected from these resources except upon the same basis as other state property.